Congo News Letter

MARCH 1961

LEADERS FOR A NEW CONGO

NOTES FROM THE EDITOR

MISSIONARIES are returning to Congo. They find that there have been changes made during the months since their departure. No longer are missionaries in charge of all departments of the work. Nurses will return to take specific positions under Congolese hospital directors. Doctors will be relieved of some of their administrative responsibilities and will give more time to medical work. Teachers will return as professors serving under Congolese school directors. Evangelists will come back to specific responsibilities rather than the administration of the evangelistic work of any one station.

Both the missionaries and the Congolese welcome these changes. They are in line with the policy established by the A.B.F.M.S. at the time the *Mbundani* was reorganized in 1958. The term, *Mbundani*, may need clarification for new readers of the Congo News Letter. It is the Kikongo name for the Association of Baptist Churches of West Congo. This Association includes all the churches organized under the supervision of the A.B.F.M.S. in Congo.

The Congolese who are assuming the administrative responsibilities formerly carried by the missionaries are Christian leaders who have been trained in our mission schools. Five of these leaders are pictured on our cover. They are the men who have been ordained by our Association. They are Rev. Joseph Mavungu, Rev. Justin Walusai, and Rev. Nelson Pambi who were ordained in 1960, and Rev. John Lubikulu and Rev. Colon Kapini who were ordained in 1959. That the work of the churches has gone forward during the past few months is due in a great measure to the efforts of these men and others who have worked with them.

At present Rev. Kapini is serving as secretary-treasurer of the Mbundani. He assumed his responsibilities in August. He is proving to be an excellent choice for the position and is gaining the confidence of the leaders from all the stations.

Rev. Lubikulu is pastor of the Kintambo Church in Leopoldville. Rev. Mavungu is heading up the work at the Banza Manteke station. Rev. Pambi and Rev. Walusai are in charge of the vast Vanga field.

These five men, from four different tribes, represent the hope of the Congo. It is only as the tribes forget themselves and work together for the good of the country, as these men are doing for the Church of Christ, that the Congolese nation will be able to emerge from the chaos into which it has plunged.

That others recognize this truth is evident. Pastor Makubungu, before Independence, tried to stress the same point in his sermon which has been recorded and translated for us by Mr. Stabell.

Mr. Justin Kisaka has been chosen by the Mbundani to be in charge of the Christian Family program which was begun by Mrs. Engwall, now retired. His own happy family life, his zeal and consecration, and his

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conviction that the woman does have equal rights with the man make him a good choice for this work. His wife contributes a great deal to the success of the program also. She is a fine teacher and has directed a great deal of the home economics program in the girls' schools at Boko and Vanga.

Mrs. Engwall has done much research into the tribal customs, particularly regarding the marriage arrangements and the status of women. Perhaps no other missionary has done more to elevate woman to her rightful position. The Christian Family program has been very well received, and the only complaint is that it was not started sooner.

Another portion of the letters written by Rev. C. H. Harvey is included in this issue. These letters from the past, telling of the beginning of the mission work in Congo, provide a contrast to the other articles which deal with the present.

The Congo Protestant Relief Agency continues to function and to meet a need. Other agencies are beginning to contribute also, but we can rejoice that it was the Christian church which extended the first helping hand. And we can rejoice too in the part which A.B.F.M.S. missionaries have had in the venture. This ministry will be needed for a long time. We ask you to continue to support it.

About the time you will be reading this Congo News Letter, we will be preparing for the meeting of the Mbundani in April. Important plans will be presented and important decisions will be made. We ask that you be in prayer for these meetings, for those who plan for them and for the leaders who will attend. The foundation of the work in Congo is firm and solid. Pray that as we continue with the building the structure will prove to be just as worthy.

THE ONENESS OF HIS CHURCH

(*This message was preached by Pastor Makubungu, one of the Moanza pastors, and recorded by Clifford Stabell.*)

YOU all know the little creature called the cameleon. According to the fable, he was dissatisfied with his color because he feared the hawk. He wanted to be able to change the color of his skin to that of his environment. He went to God to get His permission and this power to be identified with his surroundings. God granted him this power. Now everyone knows it is very difficult to distinguish the cameleon from a leaf or branch or the ground. Therefore the hawk cannot find him.

So Paul tells us that we must become all things to all men, that by all means we may win some.

Christ, the King, became a servant of men to reveal God and to become our salvation.

Paul, a Jew, made himself a Roman, and vice-versa, that he might influence men for Christ. He subjected himself to the laws of his country in order to influence the change of these laws to fit Christian principles. He went where there was no law in order to place men under the law of Christ.

Although we belong to many groups, in Christ we become one. Missionaries have come to identify themselves with us to win us to Christ. Our color is of no consequence — we are brothers together in Christ.

Samuel Mpambu, the founder of Moanza, came from the Bakongo tribe. But he became a Musuku and a Mumbala to win us to Christ. He is our example of Paul.

If we are not willing to do this, to become one in Christ, the hawk in the form of Satan, will destroy us. But in Christ's righteousness and in the oneness of His Church we can become all things to all men. The hawk can't touch us.

WE GOT A GLIMPSE OF THE PAST

WESLEY BROWN

IT was Saturday afternoon at Modiambo. The sky was gray; the air was heavy as if the clouds were ready to drop their burden of moisture. In the distance we heard the beat of drums and the chant of a warrior's song. Soon a similar song came from the opposite direction. As the two groups came into view, we found many dressed in war regalia, complete with bows and arrows, spears and old muskets.

The opposing groups of villagers gathered. Pastor Ntsomo called for quiet. "You young people who have grown up in the past few years have no idea how things used to be," he told the watching crowd. "True; you've heard tales of old rivalries and skirmishes, but today we want to show you a drama, telescoping the events of several weeks into this brief afternoon. Remember as you watch that all the participants are Christians now, and that what you will be seeing no longer exists because the Gospel has come. We have left our old ways to put our faith in Christ and follow Him as Lord. Let us pray." All was quiet as he expressed thanks to God for the change He had wrought in their lives.

Then the drama began to unfold.

The first scene — The courtroom

The accusation — A man from the village of Nzombi had committed adultery with a woman from Modiambo.

The verdict — The accused must take the poison cup. When the accused vomited the poison, indicating his innocence, a cheer went up. A victory dance followed.

But the accusing village was not to be defeated. Accusation followed accusation, trial followed trial . . . finally there was inter-village war ! The acting was almost too realistic. Suddenly the chiefs broke in and called a truce. A peace parley convened.

The decision — a slave, purchased from a distant village would be sacrificed to establish the peace. The warriors gathered at the market place as the slave was tied to a stake. The head chief raised his spear and thrust it into the victim's

heart. (Fortunately the victim was represented by a stake.) As soon as blood was shed, the warriors descended, tearing the victim apart even though he was not yet dead. The pieces of flesh they salvaged from the mad scramble were then cooked and eaten. The war was over.

I could not help being reminded of people in America who have said, "Why bother the African? He has his own happy way of life." Would that such opponents of missions could have been present that day!

To me, the crowning climax of the experience came the following morning as we gathered with those who were in the drama, plus 1100 others and partook of the Lord's Supper together. Here was the contrast of the old life with its fear and cannibalism replaced by the fellowship of those united by a common faith in Jesus Christ as Saviour and Lord.

Three days later I watched as 396 people were led into a jungle stream to be baptized.

Here, in a few short days, was the story in a capsule of the transformation of life brought through the Gospel of Christ — the fruit of years of faithful sowing by missionaries and Arican pastors.

ONENESS OF HEART

JEANNETTE STUART

DURING this past year a number of our school girls at Banza Manteke were stricken with a sickness. It was difficult to prescribe a medical remedy for it. You could spot a new case in the classroom easily. The "patient" would apparently be gasping for breath. The next day she very likely would be missing from class, necessitating also the absence of some of her classmates who kept constant watch over her. She would have taken on periodic hysterical fits.

Two or three girls left school because of this sickness. As principal of the girls' school, I was deeply concerned, and became more so when it was suggested that the girls might be demon-possessed.

The epidemic seemed to be aggravated by the sudden death on New Year's Day of a former graduate of the Home Economics School. Elisa had graduated the previous July, first in her class. Her father wished her to continue her studies or teach. Her maternal uncle, who has the authority in everything concerning his niece, particularly on the question of marriage, demanded that she return to her village. Since she had disobeyed her uncles the rumor spread that his powerful spirit had eaten away at her spirit until it was entirely destroyed. Such stories were not frequent during the first two years of our term, but seemed to increase with the growing spirit of nationalism that prevailed in the country as the people sought their independence.

When one girl asked me for permission to go to her village for a weekend where she claimed that she'd feel better, I requested her to stay on the station. On Sunday I invited her into our home. Her story was not unlike that of Elisa. She was enrolled in school at the wish of her mother and older brother. Her father was not living. Her maternal uncle desired that she leave school and marry.

I had been prone to be impatient with these girls, feeling that they could help themselves if they wished. But as I tried to put myself in their place, I realized how deeply the ideas of witchcraft, poisoning, spirit-worship and the like had been rooted in the many generations before that of Louise's. I became burdened for this girl. Aware of the strong, satanic power of the Evil One, I endeavored to explain to Louise the eternal struggle there is between the two powers in the world, but tried to prove to her that always, eventually, God wins out. Together we sought our God in prayer.

It seemed that Louise was helped and her heart relieved. Her concern lessened as she became aware that someone was trying to understand her problem, though that understanding was limited, that someone loved, though that love was but human. As she and I sought a higher power, she was made

conscious of a "perfect love that casteth out fear", and she was given the "peace that passeth all understanding." My faith was strengthened too, for Louise never did miss a day of school after that experience.

However, not always was my sincerity and faith rewarded in such a way. But having come to understand the background of similar situations, I am sure that were God's love truly dwelling in the hearts of His people, much heartache, suspicion and fear would be lifted from the minds of others and Christianity would be enabled to flow more freely through and into the hearts of men everywhere.

PENICILLIN PLUS

VIRGINIA NICKERSON

LIKE death and taxes, malaria and babies are with us always in the Congo medical work. The number of cases varies from year to year, with deliveries increasing as more and more women come to the maternity hospitals to have their babies safely and hygienically, and the incidence of malaria decreasing as a result of the prophylactic treatment we give the thousands of one-, two-, and three-year olds attending our mission baby clinics.

Vanga hospital has a new maternity, built with funds given by a Belgian welfare organization. Immediately after it was opened the number of deliveries went down. A rumor made the rounds of the villages to the effect that it would cost six times as much to have a baby there as in the old building. It's easy to see what inspired the rumor, for it is a very handsome building. And until the first patients delivered and returned home to report that it wasn't true, there were few normal deliveries and an extremely high percentage of emergencies.

There was, in fact, quite a series of rumors about this new maternity. The first was that it was for white patients. When we had finished with that one, we heard that yes, the maternity was for Congolese, but to deliver there a woman had to own, 1) a pair of shoes, 2) a suitcase for her belongings instead of carrying them in the usual cloth-tied bundle on her head. and 3) an umbrella. This last seemed to indicate a lack of confidence in the construction, for the roof does not leak. Imagine a hospital at home that limited prospective patients to women with mink coats !

There has been new medical competition at some of our stations, for the prophets or leaders of many of the "African Saviour" cults claim for themselves the power to heal and even to raise the dead. Some forbid their followers to visit a doctor or to "drink" medicine. They have spirit medicine, from the grave of the village ancestors, which is guaranteed 100% to effect a cure. If, in spite of this assurance, a patient dies, the prophet's retort is always that the medicine was good but the patient did not have sufficient faith, thus putting the blame for dying directly on the dead man. There has also been a return to witchhunts and even occasional poison trials, making us wonder if this is the fourteenth or twentieth century. All of this, of course, has increased our work at the hospitals, for many times sick ones are brought in only after they have tried the prophet's spirit medicines, or worse. In some cases they come too late to be helped by anything modern medicine can do.

Not long ago one of our Congolese Christians at chapel asked the question,"Why do people come to our mission hospitals for treatment? Why do they even come from the big cities with their excellent medical facilities to a "bush" hospital where often our equipment is primitive and our workers untrained ? Is it because we have more or better medicine? No; often we have to operate on a very limited budget. Is it because our doctors know more than any other doctors? No; there are fine and knowledgeable men at the government hospitals too. Is it because we have the latest in equipment and creature comforts for our patients? Far from it; we make do with what we have and our patients have to supply their own food and sleep on

mats of papyrus stalks instead of mattresses and sheets as in the city hospitals.

The thing that draws them to our hospitals is the faith that our Christian doctors and nurses have — the assurance that they are working with the Great Physician and that He has brought them to this work. To use an old cliché — it is the penicillin *plus prayer* that makes the difference.

CHRISTIAN FAMILY INSTITUTES

JUSTIN KISAKA

WE have had many institutes this year. I will try to show what we teach at one of them.

What is a family?

We teach that the husband and wife and their children constitute the family. The clan separates the man and wife, but the family draws them together.

What is a Christian family?

When the father and mother and children create love, happiness and peace together with Christ, we call their home a Christian home. The Christian home is the strongest force in the world for spreading the Gospel and building a strong church.

The family is the foundation of civilization.

In the family the children build the foundation of their characters. For the family to have members of fine character brings great happiness and peace to the home. It is the work of the father and mother to help their children build good characters. In civilized countries men and women are equally loved and respected. A man who has many wives cannot properly bring up his children. The government does not excuse a polygamous man from paying taxes. The children need both a father and mother to bring them up well.

Who owns the children?

Some people think the father only owns the children. Others think the children belong to the maternal uncle who is the head of the mother's clan. This is not according to the plan and purpose of God. The father and mother both own the children. They both have the responsibility to bring up and care for their own children. This is God's way of life for us. He created man and woman so that both are necessary to produce a child. He wants both to raise the child.

The family is the keeper of morals.

The father and mother in bringing up their children must understand that :

a) Love begins in the family.
b) Truthfulness begins in the family.
c) Personal honesty begins in the family.
d) Worship of God begins in the family.
e) Faith in Jesus Christ as Saviour begins in the family.
f) Learning and education begin in the family.

For this reason we Christians can be proud that our church has rules against adultery. A child born out of wedlock misses his father in teaching him many things and most of all he misses his father's love for him and his father's faith in him. It is not right for the father to leave the mother alone to bring up the child. A child always belongs to both the father and the mother.

Should girls be sold into marriage?

We Congolese have gained our independence. Let us think about giving independence to our women too.

Christians, what do you think ? Should we continue selling our girls to get money from the men whom they marry ? Isn't that a sin in the eyes of God? Our fathers and elders, as well as people in some other lands, sold their people as slaves in order to get money. These slaves were freed only if they could produce enough money. If not they died in slavery.

A person who has been bought has less respect than the buyer. In the Christian family we must try to create happiness and peace, but a slave cannot be happy because he is not respec-

ted. Always the bought person is afraid of the anger of his chief. Married couples must respect and honor one another in order to build a happy home. Only on the foundation of respect can a happy marriage be built.

Jesus died for all the people so that all of us should have equal rights in the sight of God. God is not a respecter of persons. Before God we all have value — men and women. We men must not gain independence only for ourselves. We must liberate our women from the insult of being sold.

How can the family build faith in one another?

The husband must not think that he only is perfect, or the wife that she is always good. If so it will be difficult to build faith in one another. But they must both try to build characters that are above reproach so that they are worthy of the faith of their loved one. They can do this if they are led by the Holy Spirit to have faith in God and Jesus Christ.

In a Christian home love has great value. Jesus said, "Love the Lord your God and your neighbor as yourself." The wife is the first and foremost of your neighbors to whom you must show love.

Paul, too, showed us that hope, faith and love are necessary, and of these three the greatest is love.

Therefore let us love one another in our family — mother, father, and children.

THE CHRISTIAN FAMILY AND THE CLAN

RUTH ENGWALL

SHOULD we introduce the concept of the Christian family or should we try to christianize the clan?

Much can be written on this subject, but I shall simply try to present a few of the facts which I have gathered from our discussions in the Christian Family institutes.

To pay a big bride price, *longo*, is a policy of the clan and one of its main sources of economic wealth. The price may vary from eighty to two hundred dollars. Formerly all the money went to the maternal uncle who was the treasurer of the clan. Today the fathers, who have fed, clothed, bought medicines and sent the girls to school, insist that they must receive most of the bride price. The more money the fathers spend on their girls, the higher the *longo*. Even fathers who have paid out nothing demand a high price for their girls. Although the clan is not as strong as it used to be, the maternal uncle must receive a part of the bride price.

There is something special about the *longo*. The money has great value and must be especially respected. I had been in Congo more than twenty years before I learned that the wife's people also paid out considerable amounts for food, baskets, water bottles, pails, sheets, towels and other household items, as their duty to the new marriage. It can only be called "help", *lusadusu*, given graciously and willingly. It is not to be considered of great value and is not publicized. Only the money the new husband has paid has real value. He talks about all he has paid. He keeps an account of it all. After marriage, he writes down in his little book all he spends on the family, including food which he himself helps to eat. Later if there is any trouble in his family, he will try to return his wife to her clan and will demand not only the bride price, but also all that he has paid out for household expenses and clothing for the family. Whatever the wife has earned or contributed to the home is not counted. The husband has paid the bride price so the wife and all her services belong to him.

Because he has paid the price for his wife, he can order her to do all sorts of work. He does not have to speak kindly to her. At our institutes, Tata Kisaka plays the role of the husband. He calls a woman up front, shakes his finger in her face, and says, "You, you cost me so much money and I had such great difficulty to get you because of all the money I had to pay, now you must work for me. You must obey me and do everything I want done." Then he turns to the men and asks, "Is that the way you felt?" All answer loudly, "Yes, that's right."

The wife of a teacher came to me and said, "What can I do to please my husband? I try to keep the house the way he has asked me to. I try to cook the food according to his likes, but he is never satisfied. I can't please him." From the man's point of view he has fulfilled his duties when he paid the bride price. Now he expects service from his wife. He has not learned that you get more and better service through love and praise than by command.

This week a tall, handsome, young man got up in the meeting during the question period and said, "Women do not really do any work. What really do they do all day? Whatever it is that they do, I cannot see that it is work."

I answered, "If you would take your wife's place for a day, you would know. Then very likely you would feel quite differently about it."

One evening a group of teachers came to speak to us. One asked, "Why is it that our wives are very happy for the first few weeks of married life and then their love cools? There is less and less of friendship and fellowship between us?"

I said, "That is too bad. It should be just the opposite. Love should grow and grow between married people. Do you speak kindly to your wife? Do you tell her that you love her?"

To both questions he answered no.

Then I asked, "What do you tell her?"

He answered, "I tell her about the work I want her to do." It is no wonder that love cools quickly and some wives avoid their husbands when they are too tired to take on any more work.

Can the paying of the bride price be a good thing when it gives the husband so many powerful rights over his wife?

Someone has suggested that the bride's people should pay as much as the bridegroom, but even then would it be valued equally ? Even should each side register the value of their gifts in money and not as *longo* value, it would not be a good thing since the exchange of large gifts would impoverish both clans.

In some areas the government is helping by writing down the amounts given by both clans. In case of divorce only the difference must be paid. This is not done very generally.

One night I was speaking with a group of people about the riches of their land. If they would plant palm trees, coffee, bananas, papayas and other fruits they could provide amply for their families. One teacher spoke up and said, "It is no use planting anything. Our clan would only take it all away from us. They won't leave us with a franc. They may even kill us if we show any reluctance in handing over the money we have earned."

Another teacher told me that his father and uncle had sent for him to come home to his village to hand over all his salary immediately. He avoided it by deciding never to go home.

I expressed doubts about some of this. Then one began slowly and patiently to explain to me. If a man goes to Bulungu and works and buys a bicycle with his money, that bicycle is not his until he has gone home to show it to his uncle. In the morning he must not touch the bicycle. He must go out and buy a jug of palm wine and take it to the uncle. If his uncle feels well-disposed towards him he will say, "O.K. you may have the bicycle." But if his uncle wants it he will keep it. Then the nephew must walk back to Bulungu and start all over again to earn enough for another bicycle.

In many cases the father is taking the place of the uncle, or the two work and plan together. In any case the individual initiative is squelched. The Congo men who earn salaries have very many obligations to their clans.

One of our respected leaders stated it clearly. As soon as you are married there is a sort of enmity between husband and wife. Everyone behind the husband is saying, "Bring us the money." All behind the wife are saying the same thing. Both are supposed to get as much as they can for their own clan. The home is not important, but the clan is. How can love ever grow

in a home where each suspects the other of trying to outsmart him in order to send money to the clan ?

In the clan system there is very little private property. In some areas the bride will have to give up her trousseau the day she enters her husband's house. Her sisters and cousins who have escorted her to her husband's house must all be rewarded. Later when she has been able to buy new clothes and goes to visit her village, again her sisters in the clan will take almost everything away from her. Naturally her husband is not pleased when she returns with only a few of her clothes.

The sisters and girl cousins of the bride have a way of teasing the husband and asking him for soap, sugar, tea, matches or other small items. If he hasn't anything for them, they taunt, "What kind of a man are you anyway ?" The wife is accosted by her husband's brothers and boy cousins who ask her to help them with their weeding, planting and hoeing. If she refuses, they may even begin divorce proceedings.

Every Congo man who has a salary or an income has many clan dependents. Some probably are needy, but others could work if they would. When his clan is far away he has no way of judging who is worthy and who is not. The ones who make the most noise and present the greatest plea receive the help. Therefore some people have things, not because they have earned them, but because they are clever at begging. In order to have any private property every person must learn to be clever, witty but tactful. To say to a person, "Oh, you are wealthy," is a great insult and a terrible accusation. All who hear it begin scheming how they can get part of this wealth. Even the spirits who are hovering around may work towards the downfall of the person who owns a great deal. No one wants to be called rich.

This method of being duty-bound to help all the members of the clan makes for economic chaos. It makes for thriftlessness. Why should it be necessary to take care of things ? If something breaks, it is easy to ask for a replacement. There is no need to be frugal or saving. When something is gone, one can ask for more. The method the clan uses in distributing the property makes for a very poor economy. From the economic

point of view, it is difficult to see how the clan can be used as a basis for building a Christian society.

What about the children brought up in a home where the clan loyalties are paramount? The wife suggests to the husband that he pay for the children's education. He answers, "Why should I educate your clan's children? Go to their uncle for money. He owns them." She gets the same answer when she asks for clothes for the children. What is really tragic is that the children need their father's love, his concern and his faith in them. The father needs to help teach his children morals, manners, good character and good work habits. He needs to teach his children to know God. To bring up children is too big a job for the mother alone. God gave children two parents because they need them both.

Some people think that the clan is a wonderful system because it cares for the orphans. I have just learned how Tata Kisaka was cared for by his clan when he was an orphan. His father died before he was born. He can barely remember his mother, so she must have died when he was four or five years old. No one took over the responsibility for him. Each night when the different households were eating, he would stand around just near enough to be seen. He must not beg because then they would chase him away. One group would give him a little. Then he would run to another house. Even though he ran from house to house, he would sometimes have to go to sleep hungry. When it rained he was often helped by the village dogs. Wherever he heard the dogs yelping he knew they were being kicked out because the people at that house were eating. Then he would run there where he might get food. He said that it paid to run errands whenever he was told because then in the evening he might receive some food. The clan system of caring for orphans cannot be highly recommended.

Nor can the clan system lend itself to produce a Christian community.

As long as the clan is paramount, the father will have very little to say and do for his own children. His wife and children belong to a different clan where the mother's oldest brother is the chief. As long as there is a very definite economic pull

toward the clans, the home relations cannot be very strong, beautiful or meaningful. In the Christian family we want to build mutual helpfulness, mutual faith and trust in one another and deep, mutual love.

We are trusting in the Lord to give guidance and strength to all who are trying to build Christian families. We pray that they might seek and experience the love of Christ in their hearts and that He will give them the power to build Christian family relationships.

FROM THE PEN OF REV. C. H. HARVEY

(a Missionary in Congo from 1880 — 1918)

FIRST MISSION STATIONS IN THE CONGO

LAND was secured at Matadi from Kangampaka, the Palabala chief, and the sub-chiefs of the district. A temporary house was soon constructed. But in 1880 that site was exchanged for a more suitable one a little distance down the river where the native canoes were beached. The latter site was much more coveted a few years later when the Congo State was being founded and a railway proposed. It proved to be the only possible site for a port for steamers, and the point of departure of a railway to Stanley Pool.

Craven did not remain long at Matadi. Leaving Telford, whose stay in Congo was very brief, in charge, he made his way to Palabala for the purpose of getting carriers to enable him to proceed on the next stage of the journey to the Pool. He found it was not so easy to secure carriers as he had expected. The chief, Kangampaka, had very real power, not only in his own town but also over the six or seven villages on the hill and a few more in the valley. At that time he was about sixty or sixty-five years of age. He was quite strong and vigorous, and mentally keen. He was not really a cruel man although he was credited with at least eighty deaths for various reasons; some through

sheer caprice, others in witchcraft palavers. He was extremely superstitious. I have seen the look of haunting dread come into his eyes. It was the fear of things in the shadow world which he and all the natives believed in almost as strongly as in the world they inhabited in the flesh. It was this very terror, rather than innate cruelty, which made him so remorseless and vindictive when the medicine man, through the poison trial, had supposedly proved that some poor, trembling wretch was guilty of plotting with their invisible, but evil foes, to bring upon them sickness, accident or death.

FIRST INTERVIEW WITH KANGAMPAKA

Craven, when he arrived at Palabala, went straight to the courtyard, and was invited to the seat of honor, a gin box. The chief was seated on a mat in front of the visitor, just outside his palaver-house.

The news that the white man had come brought a large crowd of adults of both sexes and many children. All were anxious to see and hear the stranger. What had he come for? Was it to buy slaves or ivory? Had he any guns? At length Kangampaka made a speech of welcome. This was interpreted by a lad who had lived with English traders for some years. Craven was then asked the reason of his visit.

Before giving his reply he asked a few questions himself, partly to lead their thoughts in the way he desired, and partly to find out if they knew anything about their Creator. He began by asking, "Who is it that made us all and everything we see ?"

The chief at once replied, "Nzambi." (God.)

"Yes, where does God live ?"

"Up above, in heaven."

"Do any of you pray to Him ?"

"Pray to Him ? No ! Why should we ? Nzambi is good He won't do us any harm."

"Quite right. God is good and loves all people. But that is just the reason why we should love Him and pray to Him."

The idea was so new that it seemed very queer. Pray to a being who doesn't want to hurt you but wants to do you good?

There was a great deal of laughter and joking among them.

Kangampaka called out, "Be quiet !" When all was still he continued, "That is enough about God, white man. Now tell us about your country and why you have come."

"It is about the Word of God that I have come. (grunts of disapproval) In my land a long, long time ago our ancestors did not know anything about God. They worshipped things which He had made, such as stones and trees. In those days they had very little clothing to wear, and their houses were not nearly so good as the traders at Noki have. They were very small huts."

"Had they any guns ?" one man asked.

"No ! Only spears and such things."

"Just like the people across the river," said Kangampaka, "but WE (proudly) have guns and powder." It was quite correct. They had guns — flintlocks of a fashion of at least a hundred years earlier. When loaded with heavy charges of powder and pieces of ironstone for bullets, they were dangerous weapons, especially to those who fired them or those standing near.

Craven continued : "My ancestors at that time did not know many of the things which all men know now. They could not read or write and they had no books."

"Could they make cloth ?" cried one man.

"Tell us how to make cloth." shouted another.

Still another, seizing a button on Craven's coat called out, "Tell us how you make buttons." This was followed by a chorus of approval.

"I can't answer all these questions now," said Craven.

Kangampaka interposed, shouting, "Be quiet. Be quiet. Go on white man."

"Well, as I said before, our fathers did not know God, nor did they worship Him who made them and gave them everything they had. But one day some men came to our country and told us that they had brought a message to us from God. They said it was a very good message. They had a book called the Book of God."

One man turned to the chief and said, "Chief, ask the white man how they got a book from God."

"Oh !" answered Kangampaka, "That is quite easy. You see, God is up above. He threw the book down and the white men who were there picked it up."

Craven did not want to correct the chief before his own people so he merely said, "I will tell you more about that another time. This is what I want to say now. After those men came and preached to our ancestors and gave them the great message, they believed the Word of God. They gave up their idols and false gods. They were taught every day out of the Book. Instead of being cruel and always quarreling and fighting —"

"Yes, yes, white men do fight too," interrupted Kangampaka.

" — they became kind and good. Instead of being lazy, they learned to work well and make things."

"Did they learn to make cloth then ?"

"Yes, and what is better, they learned to read and write, and to pray to God. Now I want you to understand that it was God's Book that brought all this good to them. Now God is sending the same Book and the same Message to the people of this land."

"Show us the Book."

Craven continued, "It is in my box. I will show it to you."

"You are giving up your own country and want to live in this one," said Kangampaka. "What a poor country yours must be or you would not want to go to live in another ! How many wives have you ?"

"None at all yet." There was an outburst of astonishment from everybody, especially the women, who were shouting to one another and laughing.

Kangampaka replied, "You, a full-grown man, and you have not even one wife. However now that you are here you are all right. You may have one, or two, or even three if you like."

At this point there was a lack of complete understanding between Craven and his interpreter. The interpreter asked Craven, "The chief, he asks you — you be small boy in your country, or you be big man ?"

Craven, who had picked up the word *mfumu* as meaning chief answered, "Tell the chief that I am not a mfumu, but I am

sent by good people to bring the Message from God."

The interpreter turned to Kangampaka, "The white man says he is not a *mfumu* in his own country, but he has been sent out here." *Mfumu* does mean chief, but it also means free man. Kangampaka therefore thought that he now saw through the whole business. The white man is not a free man; that is why he does not have a wife. Most likely he is a run-away slave. If so there might be serious trouble ahead for Chief Kangampaka. When a slave in Congo runs away to a chief and is received and allowed to settle in that town, the chief who receives him is bound to defend him, even should it lead to war. To receive Craven under such circumstances might bring him into conflict with some great white chief. Who could foresee what that might involve ?

Kangampaka, eyeing Craven very disapprovingly said, "You are not a free man, you say. Did you run away from your master ?" This question puzzled Craven for some time. But after much explanation he understood the mistake that had been made, and he began to laugh. During his school days he was known for his infectious laugh. It had not lost its influence. At once Kangampaka and the whole crowd joined in, notwithstanding that not a single one of them knew what the joke was. Nor did it matter a bit.

As soon as they quieted, he told them that he was no slave, nor could he be as there were no slaves in his country. At this statement Kangampaka became sober again. He asked rather sarcastically, "If you are all masters who is there to do the serving?"

"As regards a wife," said Craven," it is true that I am not married yet, but I expect to be before long. My lady is coming out to Congo to join me."

Craven then asked for carriers to take him further up country. The old man declared that this was quite impossible. He said, "The people up above are all bad. They will kill you and the carriers. They would try to kill me and burn our towns. But why are you going farther up country ? Did God tell you that His words are not for us? Are we too bad ?"

"Oh, no ! Not that by any means. God sends His love to

all people in the whole world. I hope from my heart that you here at Palabala will accept the Gospel."

At this point the interview ended.

Craven was greatly impressed by the arresting appeal of the old chief. For some days he could not shake it off. It would often return to his mind. "Did God tell you that the Gospel is not for us? Are we too bad?"

The result was that he sent an appeal to the Missions Committee at home. The decision was that Palabala must not be passed by.

PALABALA'S HOUSE ON TOP

As soon as it was decided to open a station at Palabala, Craven lost no time in securing ground for mission purposes from Kangampaka and the minor chiefs. A temporary house was begun at once. It had one feature that was the cause of much astonishment to the natives, and of some chastened feeling to certain missionaries. It possessed an "upstairs". The Congolese called it "the house on top." The object of this was to obtain a spare bedroom, making the most of the roof space.

Access to this upper room was by means of a ladder placed in the dining room. The lower part of the house was divided into three rooms, the dining room in the center. The ladder was very broad and the rungs far apart. Consequently the feat of climbing it was not entered upon lightly. It was almost impossible for anyone to ascend it gracefully or even with dignity. Nor was it safe to try to carry anything in the hand. Those who were to use this "upper room" would plan the time and manner of their ascent usually after the others had retired. Occasionally. it was used while others were seated at the dining table below. It was most interesting to watch the wave-like motions of the ceiling which marked the progress of the parties as they moved from one part of the room to another. It was with feelings of relief that those immediately beneath would realize by the quietness above that the danger of a too sudden appearance at the table of the friends upstairs had passed away for a time.

A violent storm settled the fate of the house on top by nearly demolishing the entire structure. Nature's hint was taken.

The frail bedroom was removed. The roof was lowered. And everyone who had had to mount that ladder breathed freely once more.

It has been said that with the building of each dwelling in Congo a life has been laid down. The old Palabala house was no exception. It claimed as a victim James Telford who had joined Henry Craven in the summer of 1878. Telford was engaged in finishing the roof when apparently he was seized with sunstroke and fell to the ground. During the night the fever mounted and his spirit passed away to the God who gave it.

Telford's death was the first among the Protestant missionaries in Congo. The blow was felt very keenly. Strange to say, he had had a premonition of the end even before he sailed for Africa. In an address at a farewell meeting he said that he was glad to go to Congo, even though it should be to give his body as a paving-stone for the road into the interior. Privately he had expressed his conviction that he had to go out to the field to die for his Master.

The direct mission work was by no means lost sight of at this time. But with so much building and other work, and such a small knowledge of the language, Craven could not accomplish much.

Telford, during the two or three months that he was in the country, did what he could in teaching a school for the Palabala children. Craven made a practice of assembling every evening all the natives who were on the station, big and little. After the service he encouraged them to bring him a new Congo word and do their best to illustrate its meaning. At first it was not easy for them to understand what was required of them. After a time some of them caught the idea and became adept at giving explanations and definitions of the words they supplied. There were of course numerous mistakes and misconceptions on the part of the missionaries as well as the Congolese. Still it was a beginning and helped a great deal in the preparation of the dictionary which was published later.

NEWS FROM CONGO

CONGO PROTESTANT RELIEF AGENCY

ALLAN STUART

SINCE the publication of "Relief For The Suffering Congo" in the last issue of Congo News Letter, further developments have taken place in the activities of CPRA. In addition to the large supplies of milk which were coming into Congo, one hundred and fifty tons of rice have been delivered to Rev. Graber at Bakwanga for distribution to the refugees. During the last few weeks thirty tons of beans were transported by plane from Leopoldville to the stricken area by United Nations aircraft. Another thirty tons of beans which had been held up at Lobito were dispatched by rail. Medicines are arriving rapidly at Matadi and arrangements are being made to distribute them as quickly as possible. This was made possible through the generosity of pharmaceutical companies and church organizations in the United States.

Just last week a gift of 970 tents from a church welfare organization in Stuttgart, (Innere Mission Und Helfswerk der Evangelischen Kirche in Deutschland) arrived in Leopoldville and have already been delivered to Bakwanga through the good offices of the U.N. relief program directors.

Mr. Graber and his helpers are working full-time. Up to the present, food distributed includes thirty tons of corn flour, twenty tons of manioc flour and a large quantity of salt. On hand for January planting are thirty tons of seed corn. In order to get manioc shoots for planting rice has been given in exchange for plants.

Photographs taken in the stricken area show that there is real starvation which needs to be alleviated quickly if large numbers of people are not to die. The tents will be used to house some of those who are too weak to build houses and they will be nourished back to health.

In addition to the distribution of food and supplies we are glad to report the arrival of the first two doctors under the

"Operation Doctor" program. They are Dr. Dorothea Witt, a former A.B.F.M.S. Congo missionary from 1932 — 1941, who has gone to Lubondai, a Presbyterian station in the Kasai, for a month and will later transfer to Kimpese, and Dr. Oliver Hasselblad who has gone to Wembo Nyama, a Methodist station in the Kasai. Dr. Hasselblad was a former A.B.F.M.S. missionary to Assam, and is at present working for the American Leprosy Mission. Both these doctors have left their own work in America to give assistance to Congo. We pray that others will follow their example.

We are gratified to know that the U.N. with all its resources is now following the lead of the CPRA in supplying food to the needy. In this we can say that the Church was right at the front. We pray that this "cup of cold water" at a time of real need may bring many who were otherwise thoughtless and ungrateful to a real understanding of Christian Love, and that they might be drawn to Him who still calls men to go into all the world and preach the Gospel.

A STORY ABOUT RICE

C.P.R.A. News Letter

IN February 1960 the American Presbyterian Mission anticipated food shortages among the Baluba refugees and ordered rice and beans from Church World Service. One hundred and fifty tons of rice were promptly shipped to Congo. It arrived during the first confusion after independence when the port of Matadi was closed. The rice was loaded off at Lobito, Angola. It lay there for several months before the Congo Protestant Relief Agency learned of its whereabouts.

Mr. Graber went to Lobito and paid over nine thousand dollars for storage and for shipment by rail to the Kasai where the Baluba refugees had located. By then the Katanga had declared its independence. The railroad line passed through the Katanga.

The rice was diverted to Elisabethville and lay there for several more weeks. Katanga authorities would not allow it to be shipped north to the Kasai for fear that it would fall into the hands of Lumumbaist soldiers.

Finally, with the intervention of the United Nations, the rice was shipped north. It arrived at Mwena Ditu just as bloody fighting broke out there between the Baluba and the Bena Kanyoka.

Mr. Graber had forty-five Congolese men to help him unload the freight car and put the rice into a warehouse. As soon as they completed the transfer, the men marched off to fight !

But with gratitude to the provident hand of God, we now have rice on the spot. It is being dispensed daily to the hungry crowds.

MBUNDANI COUNCIL

CHESTER JUMP

ANOTHER significant meeting of the Mbundani Council was held at Leopoldville, December 6 — 9, 1960. It was possible for delegates from all but one of the stations to be present and to discuss measures for forwarding the program of our Association of Baptist Churches of West Congo.

Despite the fact that the various delegates came from areas dominated by political parties with widely divergent views, there was an excellent spirit with everyone putting aside political discussion and giving his attention solely to the important items on the agenda.

Much time was given to consideration of recommendations made by the home boards of the A.B.F.M.S. in regard to the various phases of the work, scholarships, missionary residences, cars and organizational pattern. For the most part, these recommendations were well received.

It was felt that the organizational set-up under which the Mbundani is now functioning is quite satisfactory, although it

was realized that some of the procedures needed to be more clearly defined. A committee was appointed to prepare a draft constitution for the meeting of the full Mbundani in April.

The delegates stressed the importance of strengthening our leadership training program and welcomed the efforts of the boards to provide scholarships for some Congolese to study in the States.

The news that twenty-three missionaries would be returning to Congo early in 1961 to join the eleven on the field was welcome news. Careful consideration was given to their designation by the delegates. It was possible to provide missionary staff for all of the stations except one. This station, Boko, will receive periodic visits from missionaries assigned to Kikongo until later in the year when additional missionaries return.

Reports from the various stations made it clear that the work continues everywhere. All of the schools, including the secondary schools at Banza Manteke and Vanga, as well as Kimpese, were opened in September. Most of the stations have capable African nurses, trained at our Sona Bata and Kimpese medical schools, who have been carrying on the medical ministry. They look forward eagerly to the return of Doctors Abell and Andersen in January, and the arrival of Dr. Fountain in February to join Doctors Stuart and Tuttle in the medical work.

The churches have continued their ministry although the general economic collapse has seriously affected the giving. It is encouraging to realize that 1960 will be a record year for the number of those baptized and entering the fellowship of the churches of the association.

CHURCH WORK AT VANGA

NELSON PAMBI

OUR churches continue to go forward. We have not changed in that respect.

However, many of our people are no longer employed. The giving has dropped. It is not that the people do not want to

give, but it is because of the general unemployment and the difficulties we are having in our country.

Some of the villages want to set up their own churches, but we are encouraging them to remain as they are during these times of difficulty.

We are making every attempt to visit all the churches. It is not always possible to do so as our funds for travel are limited.

Because of these troubled and sad times many different types of religion are appearing in our land. But there are many people who still seek the God of Life.

Despite these times the Lord is breathing life into His work. The number of converts continues to increase and increase. Some come to us from the Catholic church. In only a very few churches has there been a decrease in the number of converts.

Since January 1960, 7908 people have been baptized. Rev. Walusai will write about the work he is directing, but this number included those baptized in his area also. Many others were presented for baptism but were not accepted because they failed to meet all the requirements.

We have added a church near Kilusu and another at Kikabi Kanika. The work on the other side of the Nsai River is going forward. Several more villages are asking for teachers. We are trying to strengthen the work at Nko. However we do not have sufficient funds to do all we should.

Above everything, please pray for us. We are in difficult times. We carry a great burden. Pray that the Lord will uphold us.

WOMEN'S INSTITUTE AT SONA BATA

MADELYN ALBRECHT

FROM December 15 to 20, the different churches sent delegates to a Women's Institute held on the station. Mrs. Mattie Nsingani was with us for part of the time. She shared her experiences in other countries where she has had the

joy of participating in women's conferences. Her experiences in Nigeria and at the Baptist World Alliance in Rio were the most challenging to the women here. Her message and her personal zeal were contagious. This coming year we look forward to seeing some enthusiastic women's groups in the Sona Bata field ready to join hands with the Sona Bata women in Leopoldville to help women both here and in the home churches.

Motion picture cartoons were used in some of the hygiene sessions; film strips were used along with the Bible Study, and a visit was made to America and a typical American family by way of motion pictures. The women enjoyed this because some of their sons are now studying in America.

Each one made a simple dress that she can in turn teach others to make. They took with them materials for monthly meetings, including devotional materials, hygiene textbooks and a textbook on the Christian Family.

NEWS FROM THE MISSIONARY FAMILY

The Congo News Letter extends congratulations to Dr. and Mrs. Norman Abell on the birth of their daughter Marjorie Ruth, on September 14, 1960,

and to

Rev. and Mrs Leon Emmert on the birth of their daughter, Michal Rose, November 23, 1960.

CONGO MISSION DIRECTORY

KIKONGO *sur Wamba via Banningville*‡

Rev. Arley Brown
Rev. Philip Uhlinger

E.P.I., KIMPESE *via Matadi*†

Rev. and Mrs. H. D. Brown
Miss Virginia Hjertstedt
Mr. and Mrs. Harvey Polley
Dr. B. W. Armstrong

I.M.E., KIMPESE *via Matadi*†

Miss Virginia Nickerson
Mr. Allan and Dr. Carrie Stuart
Miss Dorothy Wiseman

LEOPOLDVILLE 2 B. P. 4728

Rev. and Mrs. C. J. Jump
Rev. and Mrs. C. G. Weaver

MOANZA *sur Inzia, via Masi-Manimba*‡

Dr. Norman Abell
Rev. Wesley Brown

SONA BATA *via Matadi*†

Miss Madelyn Albrecht
Dr. and Mrs. G. W. Tuttle

VANGA *sur Kwilu, via Kikwit* ‡

Dr. Frank Andersen
Mr. Maurice Entwistle

IN BELGIUM

Rev. and Mrs. John Marshall
Dr. and Mrs. Daniel Fountain

In U. S. - Under appointment

Mr. and Mrs. Charles Moore
Miss Harriet Edwards

* *Precede name of each station with A.B.F.M.S., except Kimpese*
† *All air-mail addressed via Léopoldville instead of Matadi*
‡ *For air-mail add — and Léopoldville.*

All other active missionaries are at present in the United States. They can be contacted through the A.B.F.M.S., 475 Riverside Drive, New York 27, N. Y.